



The Sacred Journey with the Lord and three red Fords

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

LAKE CHARLES – A Catholic has suspended public Masses around the world, but it hasn't stopped Jesus Christ from public ministry in the Diocese of Lake Charles.

With the help of two priests, two deacons, three red Fords, and several other people, the Divine Presencian and Healer of Souls is making His Presence known throughout the territory of Our Lady Queen of Heaven Parish.

When the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic peaked in Italy in early March, Monsignor Daniel A. Torres, Vicar General for Pastoral Services and pastor of Our Lady Queen of Heaven, saw an inspiring story on the internet. It involved a Catholic priest being flown over all the cities of Italy while he prayed a blessing with the Blessed Sacrament of the Lord and a statue of Our Lady of Fatima on board.

"This powerful scene of faith, hope and love inspired me to bring the Lord to the parish territory of Our Lady Queen of Heaven since they cannot attend Mass due to the mandate of no public Masses or distribution of Holy Eucharist to the faithful," said Monsignor Torres.

After spending time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, Monsignor Torres turned to Bishop Glen John Provost and civil authorities seeking permission for a similar journey locally — not by plane, but with three red Ford trucks.

"Aside from being easily noticed, the color red is significant because it is the color of blood," Monsignor Torres said. "The Lord Jesus Christ shed his blood for the salvation of the world. With two white vehicles on either side of the three red trucks, it symbolizes the Divine Mercy image of the red and white rays coming from Jesus Christ to the world."

To put his plan in action, Monsignor enlisted help from the Queenan Family — Tyson, Genne, Luke, Zach and Emily — who are the owners of the Ford trucks; Garret Stine, Mark and Felicia Borel, Deacon Brian Kirk, Deacon Levi Thompson, Father Trey Ange, James Thompson, Noah Williamson; and Mike and Dawn Williamson.

It took nearly five hours with Garret's help to map out the route ahead of the inaugural procession.

"I knew the parish territory was large, but to drive it is very humbling," said Monsignor. "We begin at 10 a.m. on Sundays and have increased the route since we only covered 80 percent of the parish the first time out on March 22. Since March 29, we are now covering 99.2 percent of neighborhoods, which is about 99 percent of the OLQH territory. It takes nine hours to complete the route."

Through the course of the journey, prayers are offered invoking the Lord to bless the medical personnel fighting on the frontlines of this pandemic, especially in the parish territory, at nursing homes, hospitals, as well as for the families who are experiencing anxiety and worry.

"The hope is that as the Lord passes the hospitals, nursing homes, and homes of medical personnel, they may all be strengthened by the Great Physician, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior," Monsignor Torres said. "Through

the course of the journey, we are praying the Rosary, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, the Angelus, listening to Gregorian Chants, and hymns of the liturgical season."

Monsignor said it is his hope that while public Masses are suspended, he and his team will be the arms and feet of Christ by bringing the Blessed Sacrament to the neighborhoods every Sunday.

Why three red trucks? Monsignor explains it this way:

The first truck in the procession carries the Blessed Sacrament in a gold monstrance secured on a pedestal as Monsignor Torres protects it with his arms for the journey. The second truck carries the statue of Our Lady Queen of Heaven secured by Deacon Kirk and Deacon Thompson. Father Ange follows in the third truck providing spiritual music, chants and prayers on a sound system.

The faithful witnessing this merciful act of love are asked to come outside their homes as a family and kneel or bow in the Blessed Sacrament passes by. There is no stopping along the way, and the social distancing from the vehicles to the people is about 12 feet. People are informed via Flocknote text as the procession approaches their neighborhood.

After Our Lord passes each house, families are asked to immediately enter their homes and pray one Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, and one Glory Be for the intentions of medical personnel and their families.

"To see the people on their knees praying is very humbling," Monsignor said. "When I witnessed the Lord passing by the people on their knees in their yards on Palm Sunday, I could see their yearning for the Lord. This was the closest they could receive the Lord since public Masses were suspended on March 17. It was registering on their faces and in their expressions. They miss the Eucharist — the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Monsignor observes many people praying silently. Some are gazing and then bowing. There are children as young as 2 years old kneeling with their families making the sign of the cross.

"There are many tears being shed," he said. "The parishioners have been moved by the experience of knowing they cannot partake in the reception of the Eucharist at Mass. They know through the gift of faith that as the Lord Jesus comes by their homes, they can receive the graces of Christ strengthening them."

Monsignor affirms, "God is alive. God is here. God has not abandoned us. God loves us." However, celebrating Mass privately has not been easy, he admits.

"The absence of parishioners coming to Mass has had an inward sense of pain for me," Monsignor acknowledged. "I miss the people. Bringing the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament to the neighborhoods and seeing the parishioners brings many tears to my eyes as well as moments of cries from my heart. I guess that is love wailing up in me for the people that I am called to serve, those people I love very much."

Praying is the main source of strength that keeps Monsignor Torres focused during the temporary absence of parish life.



Monsignor Daniel A. Torres, pastor of Our Lady Queen of Heaven, is seen in the lead truck protecting the Blessed Sacrament secured on a pedestal during a weekly Eucharistic Procession throughout the parish territory of OLQH. A statue of Our Lady Queen of Heaven accompanied by Deacons Brian Kirk and Levi Thompson follows in the second truck.



Faithful of all ages kneel in a yard along the route in the parish territory of Our Lady Queen of Heaven as the Blessed Sacrament passes by during a Eucharistic Procession. Monsignor Daniel A. Torres has been leading the weekly Sunday processions since March 22 while public Masses are suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Praying the private Mass for the people of Our Lady Queen of Heaven Parish daily and for their intentions is a truly humbling act where I feel their closeness as I elevated the Host and the Chalice at Mass," he said.

Even through sacrifices he and so many are called to make through this pandemic, Monsignor Torres doesn't hesitate to reflect on an abundance of blessings.

"I am grateful to Bishop Provost for assigning me to this beautiful parish of OLQH four years ago. I am seeing the ongoing beauty of priesthood, and it is being reinforced by the sacred journey of bringing the Lord on the road with three red Fords," he said. "I am grateful to those helping in this mission."

Monsignor gives credit to his four housemates — Father Ange, Father Ruben Villar-

real, Father Charles Okorougo, and Deacon Thompson — for sharing the gift of laughter to help stay sane. He is especially thankful to Father Ange for sharing his gift of "movie making" by streaming daily Masses online for OLQH and for the Diocese during Holy Week.

Monsignor Torres offers this encouraging message for the faithful in the Diocese of Lake Charles while social distancing remains in effect:

"When we are focused on Jesus and are living in Him, there will be no darkness, only light. There will be no despair, only hope. There will be the knowledge that God is here, and He loves us. We are going to make it. We are going to rise from this. Pray. Stay close to the Lord. Do not be afraid."

Restoration wraps up on Cathedral windows

When it comes to designing stained glass windows, the artisans at Emil Frei & Associates don't believe in taking shortcuts. That is why they don't allow design by computer when it comes to their works of art.

"For a window to look like it has a soul, it has to be created by something that is attached to a soul, a human hand," said Stephen Frei, who is a fourth generation Frei. "Maybe it could be more efficient, but there are things that are such when you take shortcuts, they show up in the final product."

Stephen and his crew recently completed the restoration of the windows at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. They definitely did not take any shortcuts during the project that began more than a year ago at the national historic landmark in downtown Lake Charles.

"My guess is that we replaced more than 250 different pieces of glass," Stephen remarked about the exten-

sive work that was done. "There were usually three people on site, but there were a lot of people at our St. Louis (Missouri) studio remaking pieces, matching glass and colors and patterns, and doing all the kiln firings."

This was only the second time such a project had taken place since the stained glass windows were installed in the Cathedral in 1939 as far as Stephen is aware. He said about 80 percent of the work they completed was "undoing" past repairs by other people over the years.

"Once a piece of information (lite of glass) is thrown away, then the new piece gets put in by someone who doesn't have the mouthblown German crystal to match it with, so they end up putting in some other type of glass that doesn't match," said Stephen about the past repairs by other people over the years.

"We are very possessive

of Frei windows," he said, noting that his great-grandfather, Emil Frei who started the family business in 1898, played a role in the installation of the windows as did Stephen's grandfather, Emil Jr., and father, Robert Frei. During the tenure of Emil Sr., the studio became known for some of the highest quality Munich, Germany, pictorial stained glass windows in the world, according to the company's website.

"No other church in the world has these same designs," Stephen said of the Marian-themed windows. While the subject matter may be the same in other churches, Stephen said the Cathedral's windows are unique.

Aluminum being a rather new metal in 1939 that didn't rust or seem to age was used to broadly outline each scene depicted in the large windows. The grills of woven aluminum are filled with Kokomo glass.

Charles Eames, widely known for his design of the

Eames Lounge Chair in 1956, also played a small role in some elements of the Cathedral windows. An employee at Emil Frei in the early years of his career, Eames was among many artists at Emil Frei Studio.

"I suspect that Charles Eames was involved in the design of the aluminum grill that's both on the inside and the outside," Stephen said. "I've never seen any filigree design that's been used like this before."

Because of the time investment, the Cathedral project was always planned to be done in two stages. The first stage, which lasted from January through June 2019, was to tackle all the high windows so there would be no leakage in the future that would damage walls or the painting in the apse or other things. All of those windows are completely sealed from the outside, said Stephen.

During the early planning, Stephen made two trips to inspect, analyze and provide detailed reports of each window along with an appraised value. The project involved the windows being reconditioned, inventoried and documented, broken stained glass replaced and thorough cleaning performed.

After arriving back on the scene at the beginning of 2020, Stephen and his crew remained busy replacing the old rusted and deteriorated steel frames in the bell tower and installing aluminum frames with provisions for future stained glass.

(Read more at [lcdioocese.org; Search Restoration](http://lcdioocese.org/Search/Restoration))



A stained glass window in the baptistry of the Cathedral depicts an image of John the Baptist baptizing Jesus. Charles Eames, widely known for his design of the Eames Lounge Chair, played a small role in some elements of the Marian-themed Cathedral windows. Stephen Frei of Emil Frei & Associates said no other church in the world has these same designs.

COVID-19 pandemic resources

- Bishop Glen John Provost's Sunday Mass will be televised on KPLC-TV at 9:30 a.m. April 26, in addition to the following platforms online: www.lcdioocese.org; www.facebook.com/lcdioocese; and www.youtube.com/lcdioocese. Note: The Mass recorded for television is restricted to 30 minutes, so for this reason, the rites have been shortened and abbreviated to the extent allowed by

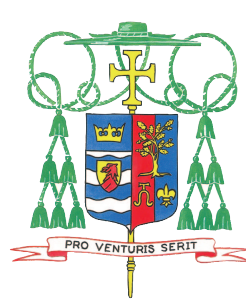
liturgical law.

- Masses throughout the Diocese of Lake Charles are being streamed on various church parish websites and/or Facebook pages. Visit the www.lcdioocese.org/3-news/2818-local-priests-streaming-masses to view the list with website links.
- Daily reflections called "A Thought from the Bishop's Chapel" can be found at www.lcdioocese.org/the-diocese/

our-bishop/bishop-s-chapel-daily or on www.facebook.com/lcdioocese.

- Coronavirus Updates can be found at www.lcdioocese.org/3-news/2790-coronavirus-updates.

- Faithful in the Diocese have the option of supporting their church parish online with #I Support My Parish at www.lcdioocese.org/3-news/2823-i-support-my-parish-option-available.



Deacon DeRouen, Cathedral featured in *Ave Explores* series

By Pamela Seal
Diocese of Lake Charles

LAKE CHARLES — Deacon Andrew DeRouen has always had a love for architecture and graphic design for as long as he can remember. But it was never enough for him to just design. He wanted to know the history and theory of why people build what they build. That yearning for a deeper understanding is what led to his vocation.

“God was calling me to the priesthood through my natural desire for beauty and meaning in buildings,” said DeRouen, who is scheduled to be ordained later this year for the Diocese of Lake Charles.

DeRouen taps into that part of his journey to the seminary and how the search for beauty changed the way he looks at architecture during *Ave Explores: Art and Architecture* — a free four-week online series that launched April 15 on avemariapress.com.

Lake Charles native Katie Prejean McGrady, project manager and host for *Ave Explores*, invited DeRouen to participate in the series along with a team of experts in the fields of art, architecture and iconography.

It was a perfect fit that DeRouen and McGrady would come together on this international project.

“I met Katie when I was in the seventh grade and was instantly drawn by her passion for speaking the truth,” said DeRouen. “Eventually, I followed her as a disciple of youth ministry in the Diocese and attribute her friendship as a key factor in accepting my vocation to the priesthood.”

Ave Maria Press chose to kick off the series on what marked the first anniversary of the Notre Dame Cathedral fire. On April 15, 2019, millions of people around the world watched in horror as the grand spire of the iconic Cathedral in Paris burned to the ground. The Gothic masterpiece, which dates to the twelfth century, became a rallying

point for people of all faiths, according to a press release by AVP.

“One year ago, the whole world just kind of stopped,” McGrady said, “so we coordinated the series with the anniversary of the Notre Dame fire.”

The series, reflecting on the importance of art and beauty to the Catholic faith, also features a segment by McGrady on the beauty of art in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

“The Cathedral is a beautiful place to worship, but whether it’s a cathedral or a small town chapel, every church has a story it is trying to tell us about Jesus,” said McGrady, who emphasized the role of any *Ave Explores* series is always about exploring faith for everyday Catholics.

“I love that *Ave Maria Press* began in 1865 as a ministry to help people explore and learn their faith, right from their homes, in an easy, digestible format — a magazine,” McGrady said. “And so in some way, I feel like the work of *Ave Explores* really taps into that history: creating good content, giving it to people for free in today’s “magazine” (the Internet), and helping them learn more about aspects of the faith.”

Content includes podcasts, videos and articles. Here is some of what you can find during the art and architecture series:

- **Week 1, April 15:** considers the importance of beauty in Catholicism featuring: Katie Prejean McGrady; J.D. Childs, author and headmaster at Bishop O’Dowd High School in California; Father James Phalan, director of Holy Cross Family Ministries; and Mike Aquilina, church historian/author.
- **Week 2, April 22:** looks at architecture and art featuring: Deacon Andrew DeRouen; Duncan Stroik, professor of architecture at Notre Dame in Fort Bend, Ind.; Elizabeth Lev, art historian in Rome; Christine

Valters Paintner, author/artist in Ireland; and segment on Cathedral of Immaculate Conception.

- **Week 3, April 29:** offers a diverse look at Catholic creativity featuring: Jen Norton and Daniel Mitsui, contemporary artists; filmmaker Rob Kaczmark of Spirit Juice Studios; Fabiolo Garza, a Disney animator and illustrator; and Anthony D’Ambrosio, founder of Catholic Creative.

- **Week 4, May 6:** will wrap up the series with talks on why we should put Catholic art in our homes, featuring: Emily Jaminet, writer; Ali Hoffman, calligraphist; and Father Michael White, architect priest. This final week will go into detail about why Catholics should put a crucifix in the living room; why Catholics put icons of saints in their children’s bedrooms; and a talk about a letter from Saint John Paul II and what the letter means to all of us.

Deacon DeRouen said he is excited about the credibility to the witness he can now give for not only having seen architecture in Rome, but also having lived in the environment for four years while attending the Pontifical North American College.

“It was like the textbook just came to life for me. All these buildings you study about in books were now at my fingertips,” he said with enthusiasm. “I would walk into a church and I could not believe that the printed picture really existed in person.”

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Visit www.avemariapress.com/aveexplores-art for this *Ave Explores: Art and Architecture* series. You can also find a variety of resources from virtual museum and cathedral tours, as well as virtual art exhibits on the *Ave Maria Press* website at avemariapress.com.

Holy Week 2020 During the Covid-19 Pandemic



Holy Week in 2020 was perhaps the most unusual in the history of the Church, with no public Masses due to the coronavirus spreading around the world. Clergy made great use of the technical marvels of our age – Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc. Here in the Diocese of Lake Charles, Bishop Glen John Provost was in the forefront with streaming of liturgical celebrations on Palm Sunday, the Chrism Mass, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil, and Easter Sunday Mass aired live on KPLC-TV. Bishop Provost celebrated the Chrism Mass on Wednesday, April 8, from the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. In Photo 1, Bishop Provost begins the blessing of the oil of the sick (used in rite of the Anointing of the Sick) and the Oil of catechumens (used in the sacrament of Baptism) before the consecration of the Holy Chrism (also used in the sacrament of Baptism as well as Confirmation, and Holy Orders). It will be from these reserves, that the priests are provided a sufficient amount of the oils to be used to administer the sacraments in their parishes during the year. Photo 2, shows the Bishop stirring the Oil of Chrism after he poured balsam (an aromatic resin, which gives it a sweet smell intended to remind those who encounter it of the “odor of sanctity” to which those who are marked with it, are called to strive) into olive oil. In Photo 3, Bishop Provost breathes over the vessel containing the chrism, a gesture which symbolizes the Holy Spirit coming down to consecrate this oil, and recalls the actions of Jesus in John 20:22, when he breathed on the apostles and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit...” The gesture symbolizes both the Holy Spirit coming down to consecrate this oil and the life-giving sanctifying nature of the sacraments for which it is used.



Holy Thursday is the commemoration of the Last Supper of Jesus Christ, when he established the sacrament of Holy Communion prior to his arrest and crucifixion. It also commemorates His institution of the priesthood and the day when priests renew their vows. In Photo 4 Bishop Provost receives the thurible, the metal censer suspended from chains in which incense burns before incensing the altar upon which rests the Blessed Sacrament at the close of the Holy Thursday liturgy. The Good Friday liturgy, the Friday of the Passion of the Lord, consists of three parts: the Liturgy of the Word, the Veneration of the Cross, and Holy Communion. It is the only day of the year where no Mass may be celebrated. In Photo 5, the proclamation of the Passion of Jesus Christ from the Gospel of John is traditionally divided between three deacons along with the celebrant, one or two additional readers, and the “crowd.”



Deacons Brian Kirk and Harold Nixon carry the large wooden crucifix with Bishop Provost following prior to his veneration of the cross while transitional deacons Joseph Caraway and Levi Thompson stand with candles in the procession (photo 6). On its journey to prominent display in the sanctuary, the cross stops on three occasions to be incensed and the prayer - *Behold the wood of the cross on which hung the salvation of the world* and the response *Come, let us adore* – recited. The Easter Vigil begins after sunset, the start of the new liturgical day, with the Service of Light. It is here that the Bishop blesses and prepares the Paschal candle, the first candle to be lit with a flame from the sacred fire, representing the light of Christ coming into the world. In photo 7, the Bishop stands in the sanctuary with a candle, which had been lighted from the Paschal candle, at left, with Deacon Levi Thompson reading at the ambo. The Bishop processed into the church in near-darkness, with only the Paschal candle for light. In photo 8, Bishop Provost and the servers have processed to the baptismal font of the church where Deacon Kirk lowers the candle into the water. The Candle is a symbol of Jesus Christ, the true light of the world. Through this prayer, Christ is impregnating the water with the Holy Spirit. It is through baptism that the Church brings forth new children. The baptismal font is the womb that gives birth to Christians.